

APPENDIX L

Request for Authorization to Establish a Bachelor of Science In Athletic Training Sports Medicine at Western Carolina University

Introduction

Western Carolina University notified the Office of the President of its intent to plan a Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training Sports Medicine (CIP 31.0503) on April 23, 2003. The University requests authorization to establish the degree program in August 2004.

Program Description

Coursework will provide students with a foundation of knowledge in athletic training, management, anatomy and physiology, exercise physiology, and prevention and management of injuries and illnesses. WCU has offered a 21-hour concentration in athletic training sports medicine within its sports management program; however, in recent years athletic training education and accreditation have undergone major changes. A full baccalaureate curriculum is now required to meet the standards and guidelines established by the North Carolina *Athletic Trainers Licensing Act*, the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs, and the National Athletic Trainers Association—the national certification agency. Athletic Training Sports Medicine is a specialized academic discipline that is recognized by the American Medical Association as an allied health profession. Coursework will provide students with a foundation in athletic training, management, anatomy and physiology, exercise physiology, and prevention and management of injuries and illnesses. Clinical courses and laboratory experiences will complement theory coursework.

Program Need

Certified athletic trainers are employed in a variety of settings including professional sports, collegiate athletics, secondary schools, health care and fitness clinics, hospitals, industries, military organizations, and other governmental agencies. Athletics training is a program of high interest to high school students and will attract students to WCU, which will assist in its goals as a focused growth institution. The program will fit well in WCU's array of other allied health sciences degree programs, such as physical therapy, nutrition and dietetics, and emergency medical care. Health-related service is one of the fastest growing industries in the US, and the US Department of Labor projects a 10 to 20 percent increase in demand for athletic trainers during this decade. It is anticipated that 30 full-time students will be enrolled in the program by its fourth year.

Resources

New funding will come from enrollment increase funds, external grants, internal reallocations; no other state funds are requested. A new faculty member will be hired to develop the program and serve as program director when it begins in 2004.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training Sports Medicine at Western Carolina University effective August 2004.